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GROUP 3600

BS99-191

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of:

WILLIAMS ET AL.

Serial No.: 09/531,571

Filed: March 20, 2000

For: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR
NOTIFYING AN ELECTRIC
BILLING VENDOR OF A
CUSTOMER STATUS CHANGE

Art Unit: 3624

Examiner: PATEL, Jagdish

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Office Action mailed on March 16, 2004, Applicants hereby provisionally elect, with traverse, to prosecute the claims of Group 1 (claims 1-10) in the present application.

However, applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement since the subject matter of all of claims 1-32 is sufficiently related that a thorough and complete search for the subject matter of the elected claims would necessarily encompass a thorough and complete search for the subject matter of the non-elected claims. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the restriction requirement be withdrawn and that the present application be examined according to MPEP § 803 so as to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to the Applicants and improper duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

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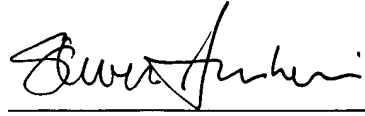
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Date: April 16, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAMS ET AL.

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